



START FAQ's

What is START?

VIRGINIA START is a program to support adults with intellectual disability and/or a developmental disability, as well as a mental health condition or challenging behavior that is negatively affecting their quality of life.

VIRGINIA START works in collaboration with the Center for START Services, a program of the Institute on Disability/UCED at the University Of New Hampshire. START, founded by Dr. Joan Beasley, has been providing service supports, clinical, emergency and respite services since 1989. www.centerforstartservices.com

START emphasizes the prevention of crises before they occur. This is done through early identification of individuals, development of crisis response plans, training, and technical assistance. The underlying philosophy of START is that people's lives go better when everyone involved in supporting the individual work as a team to develop ideas and strategies that will work best for the person.

Who is eligible for Virginia START?

Individuals age 18 and older with intellectual disability and/or a developmental disability as well as co-occurring behavioral health needs or challenging behaviors that is affecting their quality of life

Why might someone be referred to Virginia START?

Examples of individuals who might be referred include someone who:

- is at risk of losing their home or job due to behavioral concerns;
- has a history of complex medical, behavioral, and/or trauma related issues;
- has exhibited a significant deterioration in functioning over the past 24 months;
- has been hospitalized or admitted to a psychiatric hospital or training center;
- has exhibited behavior that resulted in contact with law enforcement or jail.

What START Services are available?

Each Region offers START services to the eligible population

1. 24/7 on call referrals to START, face to face assessments, and referrals to other resources, to all eligible individuals. In times of crisis, this means immediate telephonic access and in-person assessments within three hours of the request.
2. START In-home supports to individuals with ID or DD who have a CSB case manager, DD case manager or other clinical home as called for in the START model.



3. START respite home supports to individuals with ID or DD who have a CSB case manager, DD case manager or other clinical home, as called for in the START model.”

During crisis situations, should START be called instead of Emergency Services?

START does not replace any current emergency services providers, but serves as a consulting clinically-based support for individuals, emergency and clinical providers, and other support systems. During a crisis, the first call should be to the Emergency Services Provider in the individual’s home community. If START is called first, the START staff will contact Emergency Services to assist.

What does the phrase Other Clinical Home mean?

Clinical home refers to professionals, such as therapists, who in rare cases take on the role of a CM for individuals who have been unable to receive traditional case management services.

Explain further what a START staff member will do.

- Meet with the individual AND families/caregivers in their current environment as part of the ongoing assessments.
- Consultation with START team’s Clinical and Medical Directors
- Facilitate meetings with relevant CSB staff (case managers, crisis teams)
- Formulate a Provisional Crisis Plan, Cross Systems Crisis Plan, or Comprehensive Service Evaluation (all depending on individual circumstances)
- Arrange for Therapeutic Respite Services
- Provide education to families/caregivers as needed.

What are Therapeutic Respite Services?

START provides the following Therapeutic Respite Services: site based planned (crisis prevention), emergency respite and in-home supports. All offer person centered-therapeutic supports to assess and promote positive supports to individuals in need.

Do all individuals on the IFDDS Waiver Waitlist have an assigned Case Manager?

Yes, it is the Case Manager that they chose and who placed their name on the Wait List.

Can individuals who are on the IFDDS Wait List and have been referred and accepted into the START Program receive Case Management services?

Targeted case management is available to individuals on the IFDDS wait list under certain conditions.

- Individuals on the waitlist do not have routine case management services unless there is a documented special service need in the plan of care.
- For those individuals on the IFDDS Waiver wait list having a serious crisis or for multiple less serious crises within a three-month period, case management would be an appropriate special service need.
- Pursuant to current operating procedures for those individuals on the IFDDS Waiver wait list, a case manager can submit a revised “Initial Waitlist Plan of Care” to the IFDDS



Waiver unit at DMAS for approval and to enable the case manager to provide and bill for services.

Will START staff replace an individual's case manager?

No, START does not replace anyone's case manager. START staff work with the individual's current support system, including case management services.

Where are the START Programs located and how can a referral be made?

There are five START Programs in Virginia, located in the five Health Planning Regions that encompass the entire state. Contact the program through the toll-free numbers below:

Charlottesville and Surrounding Areas

(855)-91-START (855) 917-8278

Northern Virginia

(855) 89-START (855) 897-8278

Southwest Virginia

(855) 88-START (855) 887-8278

Richmond and Surrounding Areas

(855) 282-1006.

Southeast Virginia/Tidewater Area

(855) 80-START (855-807-8278)

What if someone does not know what regional program they should contact?

Call any of the START Programs and they will assist you in contacting the program in your area. Also, you may call the Office of Developmental Services:

Bob Villa, State Manager

bob.villa@dbhds.virginia.gov (804) 371-4696

Who can make a referral to Virginia START?

Referrals may be made by individuals and families, Case Managers/Social Workers/Clinicians, Providers or other natural supports in a person's life.